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SUBJECT: LOCAL ACTIVIST PROMISES PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS

1. (U) Consul General met recently with Tamara Lorincz, head of the Halifax Peace Coalition. Lorincz called to request the meeting after CG sent her a USG publication on the Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference.

2. (SBU) Lorincz, who is by any measure the most active and successful anti-U.S. demonstration organizer in Halifax, assured CG that HPC demonstrations against USG policies would continue to be peaceful, as they have been in the past. (FYI: HPC-organized demonstrators were orderly during the President's visit in December and the group's periodic marches around Halifax and to the Consulate in recent years have always been calm. END FYI.) She said that violence by protestors would not be tolerated and that USG personnel and property would never be in danger from HPC members. (COMMENT: We have never felt any physical threat from HPC demonstrations, which tend to be on the small side by global standards. This is significant since HPC is the main -- indeed only -- group in Halifax to have organized anti-U.S. protests of any significance since Operation Iraqi Freedom. During the President's visit HPC took control of coordinating the demonstrations and to its credit kept other groups to a strict non-violence policy. END COMMENT.)

3. (SBU) Lorincz had, as expected, a long critique of U.S. policies, ranging from the fairly mainstream to the totally far-fetched. She had just returned from New York where she had participated in NGO meetings on the margins of the NPT RevCon and stressed that she worked closely with U.S. peace activists and was not anti-American, but was strongly opposed to many USG actions. CG identified and corrected factual errors at a number of points during Lorincz's comments (example: "The U.S. is one of only two countries that have not joined the germ warfare convention."), but this did not seem to deflect her from the main line of thought that USG foreign and defense policies -- stretching as far back as the Truman Administration and perhaps beyond -- were dangerous and wrong.

4. (SBU) No minds were changed during the 90 minute meeting, but there is now an open channel of communication available. The personal assurance from HPC's head that the group's demonstrations will continue to be peaceful is welcome. For the record, CG declined Lorincz's request that he quit his job and "join us to work for peace."

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